

UNIFIED ARIZONA VETERANS (UAV) , P.O. BOX 34338, PHOENIX, AZ 85067

MINUTES OF THE UAV GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON FEBRUARY 7, 2009, AT ARIZONA STATE VETERAN HOME,

4141 N. 3rd St., Phoenix 85012

Call to Order: The regular business meeting of the Unified Arizona Veterans was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Gary Fredricks with proper ceremonies.

The roll was called and a quorum established for conducting business.

Mel Brody asked that the dollar amounts of the Treasurer's report be omitted from the Minutes. Motion to approve the Minutes as corrected made by Gayle Reed and seconded by George Cushing. Motion carried.

Communications and Correspondence: None.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's Report was presented and approved, with copy to be provided to the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the Secretary.

Sickness and Distress: Chaplain Bohach reported that Fred Ferguson was released from the hospital several days ago. Lloyd Kilmer, AVHOF Class of 2004, and Bill Wallace are doing OK. Barney White, AVHOF Class of 2002, passed January 26th, Barney will be missed. Mike Clemenson volunteered to find out about Nate Cooper's health and well-being.

Presentation – Dr. Leland Fairbanks distributed flyers announcing the Annual Lori Ann Piastewa Memorial Ceremony on Monday, March 23rd. There will be a sunrise service at 6:45 a.m. at Piastewa Peak with 22 honor guards. There will be an evening program at the City of Phoenix Atrium; the Piastewa Family, Jessica Lynch, Joe Hudson, Patrick Miller, and Shoshanna Johnson are expected to attend.

Dr. Fairbanks, in his capacity as President of Arizonans Concerned About Smoking (ACAS), presented information about the importance of smoke free environments. Hospitals have been smoke-free for several years. There should be no smoking in cars when children are passengers. Dr. Fairbanks encouraged UAV to encourage veterans clubs to go smoke-free.

REPORTS

1. UAV Board of Directors – Chairman Fredricks

-- Delinquent UAV Dues: Lionel Sanchez volunteered to check with In-Country Vietnam Vets regarding their delinquent dues. Dick Collis volunteered to check with 3rd Marine Division. Art Sloane volunteered to check with American Ex-POWs regarding their dues; however, George Cushing volunteered at the 9 a.m. Board Meeting to check with Tom Schaeffer.

-- Recommended tabling of the motion to incorporate UAV and recommended that it be taken up by the next UAV Chairman.

-- Copper Shield Award - Chairman Fredricks reminded everyone that Sen. John Nelson will receive the Copper Shield Award on Feb. 13th.

-- Chairman Fredricks displayed a sample banner for UAV email news. Mike Clemenson has volunteered to help with the proposed e-mail newsletter.

-- Membership Issue: Chairman Fredricks reported that Mel Brody and George Cushing will research UAV's membership categories as they pertain to veterans support organizations, such as Boots for Troops.

-- Upcoming Elections in May: Chairman Fredricks has appointed Bob Delker to serve as 2009 Nominations Chair, with Phil Hanson on the Nominations Committee.

2. Arizona Dept of Veterans' Services – Dave Hampton, representing Director Joey Strickland, reported that the State Veteran Home passed the VA Survey. As of 2/6/09 there were 152 residents at the State Veteran Home; 150 is the breakeven point.

Gov Brewer has recalled all of former Governor Napolitano's appointments, it is expected that Director Strickland will be re-appointed. Activity in the State Senate consists of budget hearings only. The 2009 budget is the worst State budget ever. The 2009 budget fix is to eliminate 50% of the veterans benefit counselors. The 2010 budget is also underway. The Tucson VAMC funding has been moved to the next budget year/2010.

3. UAV Legislative Committee – UAV Legislative Chair Linda Fulkerson reported that the UAV Legislative Committee (“The Committee”) is recommending that the member organizations and the UAV support SB 1020-Enduring Freedom Memorial; public monies -- this bill will allow the Dept. of Veterans' Services to take the \$150,000 needed to complete the memorial from the Veterans Donation Fund. The Committee is also recommending support of SB 1022-State Monuments: repair fund; purpose -- this bill will allow the money required to be given to the Dept of Admin. to be used only for the upkeep, repair and maintenance of the monument/memorial for which it was raised. The Committee also

recommends supporting the companion House Bill 2001 which will accomplish the same goal.

The Committee recommends the UAV and its member organizations support SB 1072 and HB 2172, both of which came about from the proposed legislation from the Veterans Research Council last year. These bills would allow Fraternal and Service Organizations that hold bingo permits to sell \$1 pull tabs in a lottery-like sale as fund raisers for the organizations.

The Committee recommends contacting Senator Al Melvin (R-Dist 26) and requesting he re-work his proposed bill SCR-1044 regarding property tax exemption for disabled veterans (which was also in the proposed legislation from the Veterans research council) to request exemptions in increments starting at 10% for veterans who are 10% service connected on up to 100% for those veterans who are 100% disabled instead of the way it is currently written which only provides an exemption for veterans who are totally disabled. Many 100% disabled veterans are still able to work and would be excluded from the exemption the way he has currently worded it.

After discussion, everyone agreed to provide the Committee with the contact information for the legislative lead in the UAV member organizations.

4. VA Medical Center – Sarah Nelson reported she is the Supervisory Patient Advocate at the VAMC, her telephone number is: 602.277.5551 x7394. The VAMC is working on the handicapped parking issue. Regarding the Tucson VAMC, paved parking is now for patients. There is a gravel parking area for hospital staff and visitors.

5. National Memorial Cemetery – Wayne Ellis, Director, no report.

6. John Tymczyszyn, Veterans Outreach Aide to Congressman Mitchell, reported that the VA's GI Bill implementation is set for August 2009. John's feeling is that veterans will have to fight harder for attention.

Chairman Fredricks agreed to remind Congressional offices to participate in UAV meetings.

Donna Adams recommended that the Agenda be re-worked to permit Congressional representatives to speak earlier in the meeting.

UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS:

1. February 6-8, 2009 Homeless Veterans Stand Down – Chairman Fredricks participated in Friday's Opening Ceremonies, and was very impressed by the on-site support given to 800 homeless veterans. This year's participation was higher (by 300) compared to last year's 502 homeless veterans. \$2,500 is still needed to pay for expenses, donations are welcome, and checks may be given to Art Sloane.

Chairman Fredricks agreed to write a letter to Gov Brewer asking for the free use of the Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Motion made by Mel Brody, seconded by Barbara Matteson. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mel Brody recommended that Nominees for the 2009 Copper Shield Award be on the September 2009 meeting agenda to facilitate an earlier selection and wider media publicity.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

1. Southwest Asia Memorial – Dick Collis reminded that \$150,000 is still needed to complete the installation of the memorial.

2. There is a 10%-100% property tax exemption for disabled veterans. Contact State Senator Al Melvin at: amelvin@azleg.gov

3. The AZ Veterans' Service Advisory Commission (Chair Ken Yamanouchi) meets on the 2nd Thursday, 10 a.m., Room A107, State Veteran Home. Meeting is open to the public. Next meeting: Thursday, February 12.

4. February 12 - Creative Arts Festival at the Phoenix VAMC, artists are patients at the VAMC, winners will go forward to Regional and National competition. (Barbara Matteson)

5. February 13, 6 p.m., Copper Sword and Copper Shield Presentations honoring Eddie Basha, Jr. and State Senator John Nelson, Commemorative Air Force Wing Museum, Falcon Field, Mesa, AZ.

6. February 16 - Dedication of 3 flags (US POW-MIA, and State of Arizona) land area between the Senate and the House, Arizona State Capitol.

7. February 21, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. - 9th Annual West-Mitchell Invitational Drill Meet sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion Sqd 1, 161st Air Refueling Wing, Air National Guard, Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport.

8. February 21, 64th Anniversary Iwo Jima Landing and Flag Raising Commemoration Parade and activities in Sacaton, AZ; for more information, contact the Ira H. Hayes American Legion Post 84 in Sacaton, Gila River Indian Community, Arizona, telephones: 520-562-8484 or 520-836-1022. (Kathy Upchurch)

9. February 21, 7 p.m., Mike Chamberlin Trio will perform a benefit concert for homeless veterans, Sun Lakes Country Club, cost: \$10, information: 480.802.6810 (Art Sloane).

10. The American Veterans Traveling Tribute, formerly known as the Vietnam Wall traveling tribute, will be displayed on March 11-17, 2009 in Apache Junction. Volunteers are needed. (Lew Bradley)

11. March 14th – Waves National Region 3 Conference at the Hilton Inn Phoenix West, 51st Ave at I-10, needs a color guard. Deer Valley CAP was recommended. (Linda Fulkerson)

12. Flyer regarding Naval Order's Feb. 24, March 24, April 28, and May 26 guest speaker programs was distributed (Feb. 24 – The Civil War Soldier – Dave Kampf; March 24 - Impact of Admiral Canaris, Third Reich submariner and chief of intelligence – CAPT Wayne Collins; April 28 – Commemoration of Doolittle's Raiders raid on Tokyo - COL Ole Griffith; and May 26 - Battle of Midway – LCDR Lee Marona, Torpedo Squadron EIGHT plane captain. (Carol Culbertson)

12. Winner of the 50/50 Raffle was Dick Collis, \$39.00. Dick donated his winnings to the Homeless Veterans Stand Down.

CWQLOSING & ADJOURNMENT

1. The next UAV meeting will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2009.

3. Closing prayer was given by Chaplain Bohach.

4. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m. with a closing salute to the flag.

Respectfully submitted,

**Carol Culbertson
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